

# TO PROFESSORS OF RELIGION

Of all Sorts, and likewise to

## PROPHANE,

In and About this

## CITY of CHESTER.



**T**His is in my Heart to you, in Defence of that Glorious Truth, which the Lord hath brought to Light in this our Day, and which shall never more be extinguished, though many Wicked and Ungodly Men have opened their Mouths against us, to destroy us, for bearing Witness to the same; and which hitherto we have believed, born, and still do bear Witness to, 'That he that believes in the Son of God, hath (Life, and) the Witness in himself, which Life is the Light of Men, which lighteth every Man that cometh into the World, that whosoever believes in it, follows it, and obeyes it, shall not abide in Darkness, but shall have the Light of Life; yea, it shall take Root, grow, bring forth Fruit, and prosper, to the Honour of him, who forth of his Rich Love to Mankind hath so manifested it.

Now by Reason of some in and about this City, which have made a large Profession of this Truth, and have by their erring from it opened many Mouths, who are saying, *We see the same Things among you, which you have counted Evil amongst us, and denied and judged us for, and which you once denied your selves; and yet talk of Perfection, and plead for the Light: In Answer to which, I, with those People scornfully called Quakers, do say,*

We have not only denied you, because of your bad Fruits, but as being out from that (not believing in the true Light which lighteth every one that cometh into the World) which would make you bring forth good Fruits; *For make the Tree good, and the Fruit will be good, faith Christ, the Light:* And we do judge our selves (first) and spy the Beam in our own Eye; for being turn'd to the Light, which makes manifest the least thing that appeareth in us contrary thereto, is as a Beam, which (whilest standing) cloudeth and overspreadeth the pure Presence of God; wherefore we are not at Rest Day or Night, till the Beam be plucked out: And so do we spy and reprove the Faults of others, who either plead for Sin as long as they live, or excuse their own Iniquity by others Failings, and yet think themselves safe.

And this I would have none to be ignorant of, that although we believe Perfection to be attainable in this World; yet we are very sensible, that it is not always the Work of a Day, Month or Year; but that there must be much waiting, many a Sigh, Groan and Tear; a great spiritual Combate with the Dragon and his Angels within; a diligent and expert Exercising of the whole Armour of Light, ere such a State be witnessed: But this is our Comfort, that we are truly turned to the true Light, which gives the Victory in the End; and so are not faithless, but believing; as also that the Lamb's War is truly begun in us, who fight our Battails for us, while we stand still, and behold his Salvation: But we never did assert our selves such, because there was such a Principle in us, by no means; but that all who are led by it, are so far perfect and infallible, and no jot farther: So that in Plainness, what bad Fruit hath appeared in any gone from us, and once of us, or yet may appear in or amongst some of us, I would have all to know, that such Fruit is not from the Light, but from the Enemy of the Light and of the Soul too; and all who give Way to the Temptations must bear their own Burthen: And this I must say, not only for my self, but in the Behalf of other Brethren and Friends (in whose Defence I have been made willing to write these Lines, to stop all perverse Tongues whatever, and those of all Sorts, who wait over us with an Eye to spy Evil) That there is never an one among us, who are truly and sincerely come to the Light of Christ Jesus, but do love Judgment; yea, wait for his Judgments to be brought forth to Victory, even as the Watchman waits for the Morning; and so far are any such from pleading for any one Sin in Thought, Word or Deed, that it is their Meat and Drink to do the Will of the Father; and like Gall and Wormwood to that of God in them, when it is not answered; neither can they be (in the least) content to shroud themselves under a Profession of Truth, so as the more freely to act Deceit thereby, but both desire and witness a Growth in Truth and Righteousness, as knowing, that not to go forward, is to go backward: And as for any that have (or still do) come among us, and seem to walk with us, that are otherwise minded and conditioned, then I have declared, by the Light they

are judged, and by the Truth deayed, and by the Fan winnowed, and in themselves condemned: wherefore stumble not at the Light and Truth, because of Offences; for it causeth not the Offence, but by Degrees gathereth all that believe in it and follow it into its own Nature, and maketh Fearfulness in due Time to surprize the Hypocrite: So God is glorified, & his Truth vindicated thereby: Thus the Foundation of God standeth sure, notwithstanding all perverse Tongues and deceitful Spirits against the Truth, and us for the Truth's sake.

And further, to undeceive the simple-hearted, who through Lyes, Slanders, and Forgeries, have been made to believe, that we deny the Bodily Appearance of Christ, his Transactions at Jerusalem, the shedding of his Blood to be beneficial to us; is the Light within only (Takes the false Accuser) we expect to be saved by; and likewise, that we deny the Scriptures of Truth.

To these do I (on the Behalf of Truth) testify, that the Appearance of the second Adam, the Lord from Heaven, the quickning Spirit, in that holy Body prepared of the Father for him, was for the Salvation of the V World, who had fallen in the first, that whatever he then did both living and dying had a great Influence for God upon all that believed, and hath still for all that now believe in him, as he manifests himself to us by his Light in the Conscience, for we do affirm, that to come to that is the readiest way, the only right V Way to come to true Faith in Christ, as he then appeared, and to receive any Benefit by him: And it is not another then that Blessed Light, Power, Wisdom and Eternal Righteousness, who then appeared, by whom we have received any true spiritual Benefit; how then can our ascribing particular Salvation in this Age to him, who thus now appears to our Souls, render him no Saviour in that, or invalidate his then Appearance, whose Doctrine pierc'd, whose Life preach'd, whose Miracles astonish'd, whose Blood atton'd, and whose Death and Resurrection confirm'd his then Manifestation to be no less then God (who is Light) manifested in the Flesh?

For the Scriptures.

We own them as they own themselves, A Declaration of those Things most truly believed, given forth in all Ages by the Inspiration of the Holy Spirit; that they are profitable for Reading, for Exhortation, for Reproof in Righteousness, that the Man of God may be perfectly furnished; they are the Form of sound Words; and we believe they ought to be read, believed, honoured and fulfilled, as that by which God has, doth and may yet reach by his Spirit to the Hearts and Consciences of People: And the earnest Desire of our Souls to Almighty God is, that we may witness the fulfilling of them, that God's will may be done in Earth, as it is in Heaven: And so to the Righteous Lord God of Heaven and Earth do we make our Appeal in these Matters (against all the Unrighteous Dealing both of Professor and Profane) who is the Searcher of the Hearts of all Men.

By one scornfully called Quaker, an Inhabitant of this City, whose Love is to all, and desires the Good of all, my Peace and Satisfaction being with and from the Lord.

Richard Smith.